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in rural communities made vivid by the words of our prophet. The moral dangers of small towns as compared with those of cities, the tendency to isolation and indifference to ethical reforms in rural communities, strangely coupled with a stronger moral sense, the difficulty of sustaining church life in the country, and at the same time the intense rivalry of denominationalism in small places, are among the newer phases of the problem with which Micah grappled.

Thirtieth day.—The messianic hope in Micah. In the portion of the Book of Micah (chaps. 1-3) regarding which it is possible to speak with confidence as the work of that prophet, there is nothing that suggests messianic expectations, for the reason that Micah was so seriously concerned with the social and religious abuses of his own time. But in other portions of the book the future hope of the nation is made clear. Read 4:1-5 for an example (also used in Isa. 2:2-4) of expectation of a time when Israel shall be the leader of the nations, Jehovah the arbiter of world disputes, and peace shall cover the earth. In the spirit of that hope several other oracles have been included in the volume. But for the most vivid of its messianic utterances read 5:2-4, and note that in the future time of distress a ruler shall arise from Bethlehem, and therefore of the Davidic stock, who shall lead his people to victory and peace. What relation does this prophecy have to the expectation of future glory for Israel? What relation does it bear to the ministry of Jesus? What was the nature of Israel's messianic hope in the times of Isaiah and Micah?

SUGGESTIONS TO LEADERS OF CLASSES USING THE FOREGOING COURSE

BY GEORGIA L. CHAMBERLIN

INTRODUCTORY

The book which we are to study this month is a short one, and perhaps it may seem to some leaders that a month is a long time to spend on so short a book. Yet we believe that when the month's work is finished, several interesting problems will be touched upon which it is not possible to handle so easily with a longer book in which there is more action, such as that of Isa., chaps. 1-39 or the Book of Jeremiah which will constitute the work of the following month—such questions, for instance, as the method of getting at the authorship of a book, and of determining whether all of it is one work or whether it is composite in character, and such questions as inaccuracy in the text due to copyists, editors, and vicissitudes through which manuscripts have passed. There is no other small book which lends itself so well to the discussion of these important matters, and once they are clearly placed before a group studying the Old Testament, a valuable element has been added to the equipment of the Bible student.

PROGRAM I

1. Geographical and social study of Micah's region and its probable relation to Jerusalem.

2. Invasions and threatened invasions of the times of Ahaz, Hezekiah, and Jotham.
 3. Micah's prediction concerning Jerusalem. Discuss and compare with that of Isaiah.
 4. The local evils against which Micah directed his wrath.
 5. Paraphrasing at sight by different members.
- Discussion:* Our own community and its needs measured by the standards of Micah.

PROGRAM II

It seems best for this meeting to have the leader take at least half the meeting for the discussion of the important topic of authorship, multiplication of manuscripts, etc., leaving the second half for discussion and examination of the book.

The topic may be discussed under the following heads: Ancient Old Testament manuscripts; Methods of multiplying; Standards of editorial work; Process of determining authorship; Peculiarities of the Hebrew language affecting accuracy in manuscripts.

Discussion: The evidences of different authorship from that of Micah in chaps. 4, 5 of the Book of Micah.

PROGRAM III

1. The messianic hope of the Hebrews [*Leader*].
2. Peace as an element of the Messianic ideal of the Book of Micah and of Isa., chaps. 1-39.
3. The ideal of the writer of Micah, chaps. 6 and 7, as to the requirements of Jehovah.
4. The religious ideals of the times, with which this statement must have conflicted.

Discussion: The relation of peace to the ethical and religious qualities of a nation.

PROGRAM IV

1. Résumé of prophetic work, having for its background the Assyrian invasion [*Leader*].
2. Favorite passages from Amos.
3. Favorite passages from Hosea.
4. Favorite passages from Isa., chaps. 1-39.
5. Favorite passages from Micah.

In every case the leader of the passage should note the peculiarities of the historical situation which makes the selection clear and forceful.

6. Review all questions connected with the work of the second, third, fourth, and fifth months and discuss all difficult questions.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who was Micah? When and where did he live and work?
2. How did his message concerning Jerusalem differ from that of Isaiah?
3. Can you give a reason for this difference of views?
4. What real and important visitation forms the background upon which Micah presented his pictures of desolation?

5. What class in the community does Micah first attack?
6. What would you judge to have been the attitude of the rulers toward their responsibilities?
7. What does Micah say of the prophets to whom the people look for guidance?
8. What evidences have we of the way in which Micah's preaching was received by the rulers and the leaders?
9. Give in your own words the picture presented in Mic. 4:1-6.
10. Name some sections of the Book of Micah which seem to have come from a different time and person.
11. Into what general division does the book fall?
12. What do you think of Mic. 5:10-15 as a text for anti-militarists?
13. How do you think that a religious man of Micah's day would have answered the question "What doth God require of thee?"
14. What is the answer given by Mic. 6:6-8?
15. What would be your own answer today?
16. What is the theory of the book concerning the ultimate outcome of dishonesty in business?
17. Does your own observation of dishonesty and trickery in the business world confirm Micah's theory?
18. In what way does the composite character of the Book of Micah illustrate the fact that history and prophecy must be studied together?
19. Write a paraphrase of any passage not more than ten verses in length.
20. What abuses in your own community might be abolished if the principles of Micah were applied?

REFERENCE READING

General: Henry Preserved Smith, *Old Testament History*; Kent, *The History of the Hebrews, The Historical Bible*; Ottley, *Short History of the Hebrews*; Wade, *Old Testament History*; Smith, *The Prophet and His Problems*; Smith, *The Book of the Twelve Prophets*; Chamberlin, *The Hebrew Prophets*.

Special: Kirkpatrick, *The Doctrine of the Prophets*, chap. vii; Duff, *Old Testament Theology*, Book II, Part IV; Marti, *The Religion of the Old Testament*, chap. iii; Duff, *The Theology and Ethics of the Hebrews*, Part III, chaps. iii, iv; Smith, *The Religion of Israel*, chap. viii; Briggs, *Messianic Prophecy*, chap. viii; Horton, "Minor Prophets"; Smith, "Amos, Hosea and Micah" (*The Bible for Home and School*); Price, *The Ancestry of Our English Bible*; (*Century Bible*); Cheyne, "Micah" (*Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges*); Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, pp. 287-94; Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, articles on "Micah," "Tiglath-Pileser III," "Sennacherib," "Assyria," "Samaria," "Damascus," "Ahaz," "Hezekiah," "Jotham," "Judah," "Moreseth-Gath."

A historical chart helps to visualize this period. An excellent chart may be obtained for 10 cents by addressing the American Institute of Sacred Literature.

[The next study will deal with Jeremiah and political decadence.]